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SECRET [redacted] EYES ONLY

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PAGE 001
TOR: 16 [redacted] NOV 79

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LATIN AMERICA ORIEF [redacted] FOR 15 NOVEMBER 1979.

[redacted]

BOLIVIA: NEGOTIATIONS FAILING.

1. NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN CIVILIAN GROUPS OPPOSED TO COLONEL NATUSCH AND THE BOLIVIAN ARMED FORCES ARE NEARING COLLAPSE.

[redacted]

2. AFTER FIVE DAYS OF INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS, LEFTIST LABOR AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT NATUSCH STEP ASIDE. MILITARY SPOKESMEN ARE EQUALLY ADAMANT THAT THE ARMED FORCES HAVE A RIGHT TO SELECT WHOMEVER THEY CHOOSE TO REPRESENT THEIR INTERESTS IN THE PROPOSED TRIUMVIRATE GOVERNMENT. [redacted]

3. NATUSCH AND HIS RIGHTIST BACKERS MAY BELIEVE THAT, BY ALLOWING CONGRESS AND LABOR UNIONS TO FUNCTION OPENLY, THEY CAN EXPLOIT TRADITIONAL POLITICAL DIVISIONS AND

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BLUNT CRITICISM THAT THE REGIME IS RULING IN THE ABSENCE OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. ALLEGATIONS BY NATUSCH'S FOREIGN MINISTER THAT OPPOSITION LEADER PAZ ESTENSSORO KNEW ABOUT AND APPROVED THE COUP PLANS SEEM TO BE PART OF THE EFFORT TO SOW DISCORD. BY NEGOTIATING WITH HIS CRITICS, NATUSCH PROBABLY EXPECTS THAT THE INFLEXIBLE POSITION OF CONGRESS AND LABOR WILL STRENGTHEN MILITARY SUPPORT BEHIND HIS REGIME. [redacted]

//MILITARY PATIENCE WITH THE CIVILIAN GROUPS IS RUNNING OUT. UNLESS A COMPROMISE IS REACHED SOON, THE MILITARY IS LIKELY TO TAKE PUNITIVE ACTIONS, WHICH COULD INCLUDE CLOSING CONGRESS AND EXILING DISSIDENTS. THE REGIME IS REPORTED TO HAVE AN AIRCRAFT AND CREW STANDING BY TO FLY POLITICAL OPPONENTS OUT OF THE COUNTRY.// [redacted]

NATUSSCH HAS REMAINED OBDURATE, REFUSING TO RESIGN EVEN IN THE FACE OF PRESSURES AND COUP PLOTTING BY SOME DISAFFECTED ACTIVE AND RETIRED MILITARY OFFICERS. A NUMBER OF KEY OFFICERS HAVE BEEN DETAINED [redacted]

[redacted]

END OF MESSAGE